

**Dinah Chienjo**  
**Project Director, Friends of the Old (FOTO)**

**BACKGROUND:**

Lower Nyakach is located in Kisumu County near Lake Victoria in Western Kenya. It has a population of 70,000, with 60% of the population living in extreme poverty. People cook with wood and fetch water from highly contaminated sources.

Friends of the Old (FOTO) is a community-based organization working in the 12 locations in Lower Nyakach. FOTO has a special focus of helping grandparents, many of whom are the sole caretakers of grandchildren orphaned by HIV/AIDS.

As sunshine is abundant much of the year in Lower Nyakach, use of solar cookers could reduce the need to collect scarce firewood, save time cooking over a fire, and eliminate indoor air pollution.

To maximize use of solar cookers and reduce fuelwood usage at non-solar times, FOTO has put together a Safe Water Package (SWP) that includes a Cookit, pot, and Water Pasteurization Indicator (WAPI), an insulated basket (fireless cooker) to keep cooked foods hot for hours after cooking, an upesi jiko insert to be made into a more efficient and less polluting fire cooker, and a ceramic safe storage container for disinfected water.

As the impoverished grandparents do not have money to purchase a SWP, donations are needed to provide families with the SWP. In 2013 and 2014, Solar Cookers International (SCI) provided funds for >900 grandparent families to obtain a SWP. In 2016, SCI provided funds for 1,000 grandparent families to obtain a Cookit, pot, and WAPI.



**RESULTS:** FOTO staff held training sessions for recipients of the SWP and followed up to make sure grandparents were correctly using the SWP items. Grandparents were unanimously grateful for the SWP that has made their lives significantly less difficult. The Cookit is used on sunny days to cook food and to pasteurize contaminated water. Solar cooking one meal a day, three times a week reduced fuel wood consumption and related smoke by 1/3. The upesijiko reduced fuelwood use and pollution by 40% compared with an open fire. The fireless cooker is used throughout the day to keep cooked foods or tea hot.



**Safe Water Package: Fireless basket, Upesijiko insert, Ceramic storage container, Cookit & pot**



**Cookit & fireless in front of Lower Nyakach House**



**Upesijiko**



**Rice**



**A safe water package distribution**



**Sukum wiki**

**CONCLUSIONS:** With provision of funds from Solar Cookers International to give 1,300 grandparent families complete Safe Water Packages and 1,000 grandparent families the solar component of the SWP, the daily work burden of collecting wood and cooking over a polluting fire has been significantly reduced. The request for SWP items from other grandparent families is enormous. FOTO's goal is that eventually all 14,000 households will have Cookits, fireless cookers and upesijiko stoves, to improve everyone's lives and reduce deforestation.

**REFERENCES:** [www.friendsoftheold.com](http://www.friendsoftheold.com); e-mail: [dchienjo@gmail.com](mailto:dchienjo@gmail.com)